Repair & Rehabilitation of old railway bridges is a continuous process. A well laid down system of multi-tier inspection of bridges is followed in the Indian Railways. The rehabilitation/rebuilding of the bridges is carried out based on the physical condition as ascertained during inspection and not on the basis of age alone. In case a section is selected for introduction of heavier loads, all the bridges of that section are reviewed and strengthened as per requirement.

Bangalore-Nizamuddin Superfast Train

1128. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that there is a demand from the people of Davangere and other districts in Karnataka to run Bangalore-Nizamuddin Superfast Train *via* Davangere instead of Guntakal;

(b) if so, the action, if any, to be taken in this regard; and

(c) if not, whether Government will take steps to run the above train *via* Davangere to help large number of commuters of Northern Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) A request has been received from an honourable Member of Parliament for diversion of 2429/2430 Nizamuddin-Bangalore Rajdhani Express (4 days a week) *via* Davangere once a week.

(b) and (c) At present 6217/6218 Nizamuddin-Mysore Swarnajayanti Express (weekly) is available *via* Davangere-Bangalore. Railways do not propose either to introduce additional service or to divert any of the existing services between Delhi-Bangalore to run *via* Davangere, at present.

Increasing bogies in Ratnachal Express

1129. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a need to increase the sitting capacity of Ratnachal Express plying between Vijayawada and Vishakhapatnam in South Central Railways;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is also a need to add one more AC sitting compartment in Ratnachal Express;

(c) if so, what steps will be taken by South Central Railways to meet this demand; and

(d) by when Ratnachal Express will have more bogies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) An analysis of the utilisation figures of Train No. 2717/2718 Vijayawada-Visakhapatnam Ratnachal Express has revealed that the sitting capacity in both 2nd & Air Conditioned (AC) classes in adequate to meet the present level of traffic demand.

Fire-Proof Coaches

1130. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY:
SHRIMATI N.P.DURGA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Railways has introduced fire proof coaches;

(b) if so, the trains where they are being/will be provided; and

(c) the target for making all the coaches fire-proof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) All coaches make use of material which are fire retardant to the extent feasible. One prototype General Second Class Coach has been manufactured in Rail Coach Factory (RCF) and three coaches have been manufactured by Integral Coach Factory (ICF) by using improved fire retardant material as a trial measure. These coaches are under service trial. Based on the feedback from Railways and standardization of fire retardant material by Research, Design and Standards Organizations (RDSO), other coaches will be manufactured using latest fire retardant material.

Rail Tracks

†1131. SHRI ISAM SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rail tracks in our country are as per the specifications of modern latest engine manufactured; and

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.